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Remarks:

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's search and examination of this application.

The rejection was based primarily on the Boyce reference, which is a two-piece latch – one piece being a hook 10 that is mounted on the inside front face of the drawer, and the other piece being a catch 12, that is mounted on the inside top of the cabinet. The hook 10 of Boyce defines a trough 33, with a front ramp 32 and a rear ramp 34 and a top opening. However, the rear ramp 34 extends over the top opening, so, when the drawer is closing from a fully opened position, the rear ramp 34 causes the hook 10 to flex downwardly, away from the catch 12, preventing the latch from catching on the catch 12. This latch requires the special looped catch 12 with a central opening in order to function, because the trough catches on the cross-bar 52 of the catch, with the hook passing through the central opening. The hook 10 would not be able to stop the drawer by engaging the front face of the cabinet, because it has no abutment mechanism that could receive the front face of the cabinet. Instead, if it contacted the front face of the cabinet, the hook would flex downwardly, away from the front face of the cabinet, both when opening and when closing, due to the curvature of the ramps 32, 34.

It should be noted that the latch of Boyce is difficult to use, requiring the user to flex the latch downwardly and fish the cross-bar 52 through the upward opening and then through the slot 31 in order to unlatch it.

Claim 1 of the present application has been amended to distinguish from the Boyce reference by requiring the trough to have an upward opening and requiring that the forward and rear ramps terminate short of that upward opening in a vertical plane. In Boyce, the trough does have an upward opening, through which the cross-bar 52 passes in order to enter and engage the trough, but the rear ramp extends over that upward opening in the vertical plane, covering the upward opening so the bar 52 cannot enter the upward opening simply by going straight down. If the ramps both terminated short of the upward opening as claimed, then the cross-bar 52 would be able to enter the upward opening simply by passing downwardly through the upward opening; it would not have to be fished through the arcuate slot 31 before reaching the upward opening and entering the trough. By terminating the ramps short of the upward opening to the trough, the invention recited in claim 1 is able to stop the drawer in both directions, when the drawer is closing from a fully open position or from a partially open position, and when the drawer is opening from a fully closed position. Also, by terminating the ramps short of the upward opening to the trough, the invention recited in claim 1 allows the front face of the cabinet to serve as the catch and does not require a special looped catch. This is a substantial improvement over Boyce, because, by requiring only a single piece, it

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makes the mechanism less expensive and makes installation of the latch much easier.

Claim 6 has been amended to require the latch to be mounted so that the trough receives the front face of the cabinet and stops the movement of the drawer both when the drawer is being opened and when it is being closed. This is not taught in Boyce, where the front face of the cabinet is not received in the trough and cannot be received in the trough, no matter where the latch is placed. As was explained earlier, Boyce requires a special looped catch and is not suitable for latching against the front face of the cabinet. Thus, claim 6 recites an invention that is both novel and unobvious in view of Boyce.

Claim 9 is a new claim, which requires the trough to have substantially straight front and rear walls. Straight walls, whether they lie at an angle to the vertical or whether they are vertical, would be easier to use than the curved forward and rear walls of Boyce, which require the user to fish the catch through a contorted path in order to release the drawer. The example of the present invention presented in Figures 2 and 5 shows straight, vertical forward and rear walls. Language has been added to the specification to describe the straight walls. This does not add new matter, as it is clearly shown in the drawings.

Claim 10 is a new claim, reciting the subject matter in a functional way, using "means" language. Applicant is not aware of other latches that abut the front face of the cabinet to stop the drawer when it is opening and closing as recited in this claim.

Claim 11 is another new claim, depending from claim 10, and adding that the latch body includes means for selectively releasing the latch from the front face of the cabinet.

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Since all the claims recite an invention that is both novel and unobvious in view of the prior art, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of all the claims. If there are any further problems that need to be resolved, Applicant's attorney would appreciate a phone call from the Examiner in order to help expedite their resolution.

Respectfully submitted,



Theresa Fritz Camoriano
Reg. No. 30,038
Camoriano and Associates
8225 Shelbyville Road
Louisville KY 40222
phone 502-423-9850
fax 502-426-1167